knowledge—sense-perceptual, imaginal and intellectual—require presence. Knowing the intellectual forms that are similar to Platonic Ideas is the highest form of human knowledge, attainable by intellectual perception or intuition, only through knowledge by presence, not by representation. By knowing the Ideas, human mind becomes identical with them. Kamal provides a rich discussion linking Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s arguments on the unity of the intelligent and the intelligible and the issue of God’s knowledge of particulars to Ibn .Sinâ’s position.

Kamal attempts to present so many issues that his arguments remain ambiguous and slippery. His exposition and interpretation of Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s work would be better if he had raised fewer issues and provided more thorough analysis of those. One is reminded of Fazlur Rahman’s insight, which Kamal relates about Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s being over-critical of the views of his predecessors: ‘Fazlur Rahman describes this style of Mullâ Ṣadrâ as hypercritical because all alternative solutions to the philosophical problems are rejected; meanwhile the new solutions he suggests seem not to be essentially different or in disagreement with those of his predecessors’ (p. 37). This book could have been more helpful, if its author could balance exposition of Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s arguments with critical analysis of them.

Nevertheless, the book is a good contribution to the field. Kamal’s attempt to identify the intellectual as well as the socio-historical sources of Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s thought deserves appreciation. His choice of topics is apt since these three topics are central to Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s philosophy and to Islamic philosophy generally after Ibn .Sinâ. Kamal’s work is also praiseworthy for it shows the relevance of Mullâ Ṣadrâ’s thought by comparing its various aspects to a number of distinguished historical as well as contemporary philosophers of the Western tradition.

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Religious Values & the Rise of Science in Europe


In his famous The Protestant Ethic, Max Weber presented the idea that the peculiar ‘work ethic’ of Protestantism contributed significantly to the rise of science and technology in western Europe and ultimately to the formation of the world as it is today. About Islam, Weber did not have much good to say. In his Economy and Society the Muslims appear as followers of a warrior cult.

Even though researchers have been challenging these theories for many years, they appear to be quite persistent and are still frequently evoked in present-day

Among the articles dealing with science in the West, Trepp’s and Howell’s articles deserve to be singled out because of their methodological and terminological reflections, which could also be adopted by researchers who deal with other historical or religious spheres. Trepp, for instance, substitutes ‘natural science’ for the wider term ‘nature’ as the object of ‘culturally determined projections, values and practices’ (p. 82). To assess the interactions between an individual’s scientific and theological concepts, Howell suggests a ‘tripartite division between “consistent with”, “motivated by”, and “integrated into”’ (p. 112). Iliffe, in his interesting article, endeavours in a similar way to explore the complex connections between Newton’s scientific and his alchemical and theological writings.

An intriguing feature of this section is that the authors who deal with Lutheranism approach similar problems from different angles and come to opposed results (Barker highlighting the role of Lutherans in spreading Copernicus’ works, others arguing that these events were more complex), a phenomenon which has been skilfully pointed out in John Brooke’s introduction, where the different arguments are summarized and compared.

The section on Islamic studies includes contributions from two outstanding representatives of the recently growing, but still rather limited, interest in science in the Islamic world in early modern times. Ekmeleddin Ihsanog˘lu deals with the introduction and gradual acceptance of Western astronomy in the Ottoman world since the mid-seventeenth century in a short, but pioneering survey (a revised version of an article published in 1987). In this comprehensive overview, he includes a rich collection of original material and fascinating insights into how Ottoman writers accommodated Islamic astronomical
traditions, religious ideas and the new ideas coming from the West. This is a very valuable contribution to the history of intellectual contacts between the Ottomans and the early modern West and offers intriguing glimpses of Muslim perceptions of the political and technological rise of Western Europe. It covers an almost entirely neglected area in the history of Islamic science and should also be of great interest to those primarily concerned with astronomy in the West.

Sonja Brentjes, in a brilliant article that deserves to be read by every historian of Islamic science, describes how Western authors have shaped the image of the barbarian Turk and the cultivated Persian and laid the foundation for persisting trends in the historiography of science. She presents a complex analysis of three case studies, contrasts the statements of Western authors with her own findings regarding Ottoman science, and points to a number of reasons for the rise of those images, which are clearly a distortion of the reality of science in the early modern Islamic world.

By and large, this is a fascinating collection of articles, some of which are truly excellent and very readable. They explore new areas and material and appeal to a larger audience, whereas others will be read only by those interested in the specific subject. In particular, the two articles on Galileo might have been better published in a journal or a volume dedicated to this author. Historians of science should applaud the fact that this volume combines articles on both Christian and Islamic religion and science. This has become common in medieval studies, but publications on later centuries too often focus on one cultural milieu. Regrettably, the third religion on the European continent, Judaism, has been almost completely left out. Furthermore, the articles in this volume are largely self-contained and do not connect with each other’s ideas. Some of the articles in the section on Lutheranism compare Luther’s impact with that of Melanchthon, and Lutheranism with Calvinism and other religious trends of that time, yet the opportunity for a profound comparative perspective, in particular between Christianity and Islam, is missed. Only the two articles on Islamic history of science combine aspects of East and West in an interesting way.

The variety of topics, historical and cultural contexts, and analytical perspectives, would have required an ambitious and original framework to hold these pieces together in a single, coherent book. Unfortunately, the framework as expressed in the title remains weak and inconsistent. The authors offer interesting insights into relations between religion and science, yet the question of human values and religious values in particular, is almost nowhere addressed in any depth. Most authors dismiss the notion of an immediate impact of religion—in the sense of a set of doctrines—on scientific developments (as proposed by Weber) as too general, or they do not raise such questions in the first place.

John North’s article might have served the purpose of defining the general scope of the book. Yet, unlike most other articles, it offers only rather kaleidoscopic glimpses into various examples of transmission of science. Over the past twenty years a number of great scholars (e.g. Thomas Glick with his comparative study on Islamic and Christian Spain) have dealt with intellectual exchanges between the
different religious groups in the Middle Ages and in early modern times, but their research has been completely ignored in this article.

Finally, there are several technical shortcomings that should probably be blamed on the publisher. The production of the text is rather unsatisfactory—the articles are not carefully edited and contain a number of typos and syntactic lapses. Also, readers interested in more than one article would have been helped by an index.

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Neue kritische Gänge: Zu Stand und Aufgaben der Sufikforschung/New Critical Essays: on the Present State and Future Tasks of the Study of Sufism


This compact book contains a collection of five essays mostly written in German by the Utrecht-based Islamicist Bernd Radtke at different moments during the past twenty years. Originally meant for separate publication, the essays address a wide range of different subjects linked, as the title suggests, by the common purpose of critically assessing the quality of recent scholarship in the field of Islamic Studies in general and the study of Sufism in particular. In a self-consciously provocative manner, Radtke bluntly denounces what he sees as the deplorable state of contemporary scholarship, especially among the younger generation of Islamicists. In many regards a representative of the old German school, Radtke mainly criticizes the lack of precision in translating mediaeval Arabic and Persian Sufi texts and the adoption of false premises which, as he sees it (essays 2 and 3), result in the inevitable failure to analyse and interpret the texts correctly. This criticism extends to more general theoretical issues and, among other things, questions the validity of an intellectual approach—especially in history and social anthropology and notably in Anglo-Saxon academia—based on the application of modern Western theories to ideas and concepts perceived as very remote both in time and in space.

In the first essay titled ‘Von der unerträglichen Nettigkeit des Seins’ (About the unbearable kindness of Being, pp. 1–25), Radtke voices his critical concern with regard to the work of the renowned German scholar Annemarie Schimmel. Written on the occasion of the award to Schimmel in 1995 of the highly acclaimed German Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels—one of the country’s highest recognitions for outstanding intellectual contributions in the field of humanities—for the promotion of a better understanding between the Western world and Islam, it sparked a heated controversy in Germany because of Schimmel’s apparently supportive stance (expressed shortly before the